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# The Metaphysics

OF THE

# Saiva Siddhanta System

BY

K. SUBRAMANIA PILLAI, M. A., M. L.,

ADVOCATE,

Tagore Professor of Law, Calcutta.

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K. SUBRAMANIA PILLAI, M. A., M. L.

# INTRODUCTION.

It is not so much the author as the subject that needs an introduction. The Saiva Siddhanta System, which is the finished product of Tamil culture, excels all other systems of philosophical thought in two respects; (*a*) There is complete harmony effected between the Innovent and the Transcendental theories of God which it is not possible to find elsewhere (*b*) great prominence is attached to the Anavamala inherent in the Soul and various methods of Soul culture are prescribed either to eradicate the mala or to keep it strictly within bounds. The practical effect of these two cardinal features of the system on life is something marvellous. There is complete concordance between theory and practice on vital matters like the path of devotion, the value of service to fellow-beings, idol worship, symbol worship and the like.

The process of ratiocination which we find in the Saiva Siddhanta System is not merely rigid logic having no regard whatever

to the actualities of life; it is not merely a deduction from the Scriptures having no regard whatever to the conclusions of science. It is on the other hand a happy admixture of science and psychology; of ethics and theology. One remarkable feature of the system is its principle of tolerance of other systems which it adopts as graded steps leading to itself as the ultimate Truth.

Faint glimpses of the system are to be found in the independent efforts of Western philosophers. Pragmatism and Humanism bear traces of Saiva Siddhanta thought in a crude form. It is essential that the Saiva Siddhanta System should be interpreted in terms of Western thought to the West at this juncture in order that the evolution of their new systems may proceed on the right lines. All lovers of philosophy will therefore welcome this book on the "Metaphysics of the Saiva Siddhanta System." It comes from the pen of a well-known and talented author who is devoting his life-time to a study of the system in all its aspects. His interpretation of the system to the West will have, therefore, a peculiar force.

Hitherto the system has been practically confined to the Tamil country. Recently several scholars have been doing real service by publishing it broadcast. Treatises in the English language on the system have been a long felt want. The appearance of this book will, I believe, to some extent supply this want.

May I appeal to all students of Saiva Siddhanta Philosophy to come forward with similar books in English on the various aspects of the system so that not only our country but all English speaking peoples may benefit thereby. May all their efforts be crowned with success and may Saiva Siddhanta shed its lustre far and wide through out the length and breadth of the Universe.

M. BALASUBRAHMANYAM,

B. A., B. L.

# THE METAPHYSICS OF THE SAIVA SIDDHANTA SYSTEM

## (AN OUTLINE)

### WESTERN OPINION

This system has been pronounced by the late Dr. G. U. Pope of Oxford "as the choicest product of the Dravidian intellect." The same view has been expressed in greater detail by Rev. C. Gowdie, who says "This system possesses the merits of great antiquity; in the religious world it is heir to all that is most ancient in Southern India. It is a religion of the Tamil people by the side of which every other form is of comparatively foreign origin. As a system of religious thought, as an expression of faith and life, the Saiva Siddhanta is by far the best that South India possesses; indeed it would not be rash to include the whole of India and to maintain that judged by its intrinsic merits, the Siddhanta represents the high

water mark of Indian thought and Indian life."

## HISTORICAL SKETCH

Recent research shows that at a remote period in the history of the Tamils answering to pre-vedic times, a class of high-souled seers called Arrivars (அறிவர்) developed a rare system of metaphysics and psychic science and taught the same to their disciples and followers. It appears that originally there were four secret sacred books on the subject by four great saints of old and later on, a group of five saints gave birth to twenty-eight mystic works corresponding to the 'Sivagamas' of the day. These two sets of books were regarded as the highest authority by the ancient Tamils. Superfluous it is to refer to countless minor books based on them.

During the Vedic age we have reason to infer that the Tamilians or Dravidians inhabited this land from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin and beyond, and that several of the Tamil princes in Northern India were well versed in the philosophy of the Arrivars.

Probably it was to one of these rulers that the four Brahmins of the Chandokya Upanishad resorted for spiritual enlightenment. It is interesting to note that the prince was surprised to see that they were the first Aryan priests that approached him for attainment of divine wisdom. In process of time, it came to pass that many of the ideas and words of this system found a prominent place in some of the Vedic songs and Upanishads, and a cycle of Sanskrit literature called Tantric or Agamic came into being as adaptations of the mystic lore of the Tamil Saints.

This event is of infinite importance from the historical stand point; for it served to preserve at least in a rough Sanskrit garb fragments of the traditional system of the Arrivars at a time when violent inroads of the sea occuring at two distant landmarks of time engulfed a vast portion of the Tamil country which now forms the basis of the Indian ocean. Not only did these deluges once for all hide from human view the glorious cities of 'golden gates' (to which Valmiki refers in his Ramayana) wherein Pandian monarchs

had treasured up the most splendid products of their hoary civilization, but they washed away even the last vestiges of the grand libraries of science, art and literature which the first two Tamil academies had reared up through ages of culture and development. The last corner-stone vouch safed as a foothold for posterity is the Tholkoppiam which has been almost the only real source of inspiration to the student of Tamilian History and Archaeology for the past three thousand years. In Tiruvalluvar as well as in this ancient grammar we find the first allusions extant to the psychic culture of the Arrivars.

In the post-diluvian age, these great men came to be called Siddhars in Tantric literature. It was the school of Siddhars with Saint Tirumular at their head that kept alive the flame of philosophical and mystic learning in their enigmatic Tamil songs up to the age of Tevaram hymnists. Now the ancient system came down to the Tamil people with the Tantric stamp on it. In other words, its terminology became mainly Sanskritic and most of the later day writers were content with tracing the Siddhanta to Agamic and

Upanishadic sources in Sanskrit. About this time arose the necessity for a comparative study of the system with the doctrine of the Tantric creeds and Vedic schools of thought. In the days of the Arrivars, this system went by the names of 'the happy path', 'the road of bliss', 'the path of light', 'the one way' and 'the great way' etc. After the special Tamil term for God viz,, Siva (meaning good, upright, pure and blissful) was taken up into Sanskrit, the religion came to be called Saivism. The word 'Siddhanta' bears two meanings viz, (1) the conclusions of the Siddhars (2) the final word or the end of ends. Needless it is to indicate that the phrase Saiva Siddhanta is a combination of the two terms 'Saiva' and 'Siddhanta.'

Although the four great leaders of Saivism who flourished before the 8th century have given distinct expression to the essential principles of the system in their sublime devotional lyrics, an exposition of the same in a scientific manner is found only in Saint Tirumular's Tirumantram, Gnanamirtam, Tiruvunthiar, Tirukalituppadiar, and a few other books prior to the age of Sri Mei-

kandar, the inspired Vellala boy-saint of Tiruvennainallur who inauguarated the renaissance of Siddhanta Philosophy in the 13th century. His famons work called Sivagnanabodham is the central gem of Saiva Siddhanta Literature and presents in a nutshell the whole system of Siddhanta religion and philosophy. Sri Arulnandi Sivacharyar, the first of the forty-nine disciples of Sri-Meikandar is the author of another important work 'Sivagnana-Siddhiar' which is virtually an expansion of his master's production. Another work of St. Arulnandi is called Irupavirupathu. A book called Unmaivilakam on the same subject was written by Saint Manavasakam kadandar; about the same time eight other works were written by Saint Umapathi Sivam the disciple of Saint Arulnandi's disciple. All these twelve works with Tiruvunthiar and Tirukalitup-padiar already mentioned, are known as the fourteen standard Saiva Siddhanta books at the present day. Sivagnanabodham in this system occupies the same position as the Brahma-sutram or the Bagavat Gita of the orthodox Vedic school. Corresponding to the Bhash-yams of Sri Sankara, Ramanuja etc. on these

there is a grand superb Tamil commentary on Sivagnanabodham by St. Sivagnana Munivar of Tiruvavaduthurai Adhinam, who flourished in the 18th century. Sivagrabhashyam is a big sanskrit commentary on the sanskrit rendering of the Tamil Sivagnanabodham. Space does not permit reference to other treatises on the subject.

Some of the standard works on Siddhanta Philosophy like Sivagnana Siddhiar commence with a brief statement and criticism of the tenets of other Indian systems of thought which are grouped into four divisions, each of which comprises six schools of philosophical opinion. In the first are placed (1) materialism known as Lokayatham, (2-5) four sections of Buddhism and (6) Jainism. This group is called Purapuram. In the second, we find the Vedic systems of Mimamsa, Sankya, Vaiseshika, Nyaya, Yoga and Ekatmavada together with Pancharatram or (Vaishnavam). Vaiseshika and Nyaya are clubbed together as the Tarka school of thought. This group is called Puram. The third and the fourth groups are mainly Tantric, the former differing from the Siddhanta in respect of its doctrine

about the nature of the soul and the final goal; and the latter showing a divergence only with reference to ultimate salvation. The creeds of the former are named Pasupatham, Mavirtam, Kapalam, Vamam, Bhairavam and Aikyavadam and those of the latter, Padanavadam, Bhedavadam, Isvara Avikara vadam, Sivasamavadam, Sankiranthavadam and Sivadwaitham. What is called Suddhasaivam makes the nearest approach to the Siddhanta system, and in the name of Saivavadam, it has been put into the fourth category by Sri Umapathisivam in his Sankalpanirakaranam. All these are looked upon as a gradation of steps leading up to the Siddhantam which transcends them all. It is for this reason that it has been called the 'end of ends', beyond which there is no path.

No reference is here necessary to the traditional six creeds of the Agamic side viz., Kaumaram, Ganapatiyam, Souram, Shaktaism, Vaishnavam and Saivam which claim no 'special system of Philosophy as their basis. Such of them as trace their origin to metaphysics come under the systems above mentioned or within the Saiva Siddhantam.

The six 'end systems' which Saint Tirumular alludes to in his immortal work represent different stages in the evolutions of psychic Science and are called Siddhantam, Vedantam, Bodhantam, Nadantam, Yogantam and Kalantam.

## DOCTRINAL SKETCH

Now we shall consider the doctrinal side of the Saiva Siddhantam. The phenomenal world is divisible into two grand sections under the heading of Spirit and Matter. The Saiva writers use terms meaning the Intelligent and the Unintelligent. The former signifies God or the Absolute and other countless intelligences known as souls and the latter, the world of Nature. It is in respect of these three entities God, Soul and Nature and their relation to one another that differences in doctrine arise among philosophers. Pursuing the orthodox method, we shall pass in review the views of various schools of thought.

## OTHER SYSTEMS OF THOUGHT

### LOKAYATHAM

The materialists of this land called Lokayathas or Charuvakas held that in the

evolution of the world, four stages were perceptible and accordingly believed only in the existence of the principles which brought about the solid, liquid, fiery and gaseous condition of things. For them no soul or God existed and they did not even recognise what we call ether. They regarded human intelligence as a resultant of the combined operation of the four material entities above mentioned. In the light of this doctrine they shaped their ideal of life and practice. While condemning thiestic belief and practice, they advocated the development of agriculture, commerce and industry and agitated for the constitution of the Government in the interests of the people. A section of them inclined to the view that the five senses constituted the soul ! another class advanced the opinion that the senses depended for the proper exercise of their functions on Breath-energy which should therefore be taken to be the real soul. A third section of this school surmised that the intellect was the soul. At this point the materialists trenched upon the ground of the Buddhists.

## BUDDHISM

The general Buddhistic doctrine is that the soul is the sum total of moments of perception and that the continuity of intelligence is maintained by every impression associating itself with its successor by virtue of its retentive force. If this power of association snaps once for all, then dawns the final salvation. One class of Buddhists hold that the annihilation of consciousness itself is the glorious end of their faith. With Buddhists came the doctrine that the external world should be regarded as co-eval and co-existent with consciousness. If consciousness is renewed every moment, everything in Nature similarly appears and dies each second of preception.

There are four schools of Buddhistic metaphysics all of whom agree in holding to the phenomenon of Universal momentary change but differ from one another in the interpretation of their master's teaching with reference to the reality or otherwise of the external world. Madhyamikas who represent the first shade of opinion hold that everything

in the Universe including consciousness has only an illusory existence, and nothing in fact exists. Their argument is that what exists will not die, and what is not in existence will not come into being, so that there is only appearance and disappearance of things every moment of experience.

Yogacharas, the second class of Buddhistic interpreters question the unreal character attributed to consciousness by the first school. They choose to hold that being the basis of personal experience, consciousness should be deemed real, while the external world must be regarded as a hallucinative or dream-like projection of the mind.

Another school of this system rejects this idealistic theory and regards the external world as well as consciousness as quite real, but contends that the former is not directly perceptible. Its opinion is that every physical object simply touches the focus of consciousness and passes off instantly, leaving only its impression therein; and it is this impression that is perceived as the thing itself. The champions of this school

called Sautrantikas ascribed the origin of the physical universe to the action of atoms of four kinds and analysed the system of inner experience into five orders answering to the psychological processes of sensation, perception, conception, feeling and willing The fourth school of Buddhistic doctrine differs from this only in holding that it is the external world itself that is subject to direct perception and not its impression on the intellect.

## JAINISM

The Buddhists thus advanced a step above the materialists but failed to penetrate to the agency which unifies intellectual and emotional activity. In this respect, the Jains progressed further and posited the existence of a soul of which consciousness was the main mark. They too never believed in a Creator, but looked upon as God the first of the souls that attained perfection in evolution. They also adopted the atomic theory of the world and held that each soul should work out its own salvation by eschewing evil deeds and doing good to humanity at large. When by

dint of merit, the bonds of birth are broken, the soul will reside free or rise higher and higher in the ethereal firmament.

## VEDIC SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

So much about the Purapura group. In the Pura group, the Mimamsa is the least philosophic and the most dogmatic. The Veda is believed to be eternal and the strict performance of what is laid down therein secures one the attainment of his aims and aspirations. While this creed is as athiestic as those of the Pura groups, it holds the souls and the world to be real just like Jainism.

No doubt the Vaiseshika and Nyaya systems admit the existence of an Almighty Creator, but have a poor conception of the soul. The mind which is the spring of knowledge for the soul is an infinitesimal material atom attaching to each soul. Detached from mind, the soul would be inert like a stone. Final bliss consists in a stage of stone-like indifference to pain and pleasure resulting from the dissociation of the mind from the

soul. With some modification, the Tarka schools have adopted the atomic theory of the world and hold that the atoms move in pairs. But they attribute the action of atoms to the energising of them by God. Space and Time are considered to be different aspects of the same entity.

Turning to the Sankhya school which is also a Godless one, we find the analysis of the Universe to be far deeper than in the preceding systems. In this system, the atomic theory is rejected and the phenomenal world is traced to the subtle substratum which underlies our psychic and physical operations. All forms of matter are reducible to an unintelligent something, which is not matter itself in the sense of the term as used in physical science. This fact has been recently recognised by Western scientists. Now this something is derived from one of the three parts of a subtler entity which vary in their nature and form the back ground respectively of the activity of the senses, of the motor nerves and of pre-matter forms. A deeper layer than this is the medium of

intellectual or thinking processes. Now, this too is traceable to a trifold subtler stratum which serves to evolve the good, middling and bad tendencies of the soul and goes by the name of Gunatatwam. The root of this is regarded by the Sankhyans as the primordial basis of Nature and is styled Mulaprakriti. The soul is a being of pure intelligence, by nature free and actionless whose timeless association with Mulaprakriti has been productive of pain and pleasure to it. If the soul realises its true nature, *e.g.*, its independence of Nature, its salvation is then assured for ever.

Upon this system of Kapila, the author of Yoga-Sutram has improved by positing the existence of a God who is the great Instructor of the souls. His book deals with eight forms of Yogic practice which are of immense value for spiritual emancipation.

The systems hitherto dealt with represent the advance of thought from an analysis of Nature to its primeval substratum. The idea of the soul is common to Jainism and all the systems of the Vedic group. The Tarka and

the Yoga schools alone are thiestic in character, but even they do not speak clearly of the immanence of God in the Universe. Only in the Tarka systems God is regarded as a Creator, while St. Patanjali, in his Yoga Sutram views Him only as a Light-giver. These dualistic systems perhaps supplied the material for the Madhwa school of thought at a later day.

Now we shall pass on to Ekatmavadam or monism of Sri Sankara. This doctrine appears to be an eclectic combination of some of the cardinal ideas of Buddhistic Yogachara creed and of the adherents of Sankhya and Yoga systems. The first of these originated the idealistic conception of the world; the second spoke of the soul as bondless and actionless in reality; and the third spoke of a great Soul the fountain of wisdom for others. Now the monistic school perhaps sought to harmonise all these by holding the world to be illusory in fact, and identifying the intelligent many of the Sankhyans with the intelligent One of the Yogins, since there was hardly any difference between the attributes of both. But it had to reconcile the multiplicity

of souls with the oneness of God. Either plurality or unity must be the fact. Since unity attaches to the great Soul, they jumped to the conclusion that multiplicity must be only apparent. Then they had to account for such an appearance. This they did by attributing it to Mulaprakriti, otherwise called Maya, and laying it down that the contact of Maya with Brahman (i-e., the one Soul) caused its reflection in the form of the unintelligent world and intelligent souls. What is this maya? Is it an intelligent or unintelligent entity? The answer of the Monists is that it is something of which nothing can be said.

According to the orthodox view, the monistic theory of the Vedantins has its basis on the interpretation of the two terms 'Ekam' and 'Adwaitam' in the Vedic books. These terms applied to God and were taken by the monists to have an identical meaning in the light of the Vedic verse which means 'One without a second'. Accordingly, wherever God is described as being Adwaitic with the world, it was understood by them that God is the world itself in another form. Science traced

the world to Mulaprakriti or Maya. Now for the purpose of holding to the truth of the said Vedic verse, they had to associate God with Maya and hold the world to be unreal since the Reality is only one. (In fact, the Vedic verse meant that there is only one God without a second, and was intended to inculcate the principle of Monotheism). The adherents of this school were known as Mayavadins.

This theory was modified by another section of the same school who declared that God himself became the Universe, just as sweet milk turns into sour curd. Out of Him was evolved the intelligent and the unintelligent universe and ignorance of such evolution caused His self-limitation. Removal of such ignorance secures one salvation. This theory has had much influence on the ideas of Vaishnavaites and the adherents of Tantric creeds like Vamam, Bhairavam etc.

There is a third shade of opinion that the Universe is God sporting himself by evolution. The fourth section of the Ekatmavadins hold that God is the Voice of the Silence and His form is the primeval sound that gave birth

to the sentient and the non-sentient world as a whole.

## VAISHNAVISM

The Pancharatra Vaishnavas accept the Sankhyan view of the material world but hold, like the second section of Ekatmavadins mentioned above, that out of God sprang four great beings who evolved all the universe. Hence souls and the unintelligent world are really attributes or parts of God Vishnu. Many of the Tantric creeds of the third and the fourth groups betray traces of the influence of the Ekatmavada doctrine. They need not be dealt with here, since they are not so well known to the world now. These two groups are styled *Akapuram* and *Akam* respectively.

Even the philosophy of the Christian and Muhammadan religions is at bottom as monistic as Vaishnavism. If God has created the soul out of Himself, it points to the substantial identity of the intelligent many with the intelligent One.

On the Vedic side, it is only the Madhwa system of mediæval times and that of Swami

Dayananda of the present day that have escaped the influence of the monistic doctrine and are sternly dualistic in their conception of the relation between God and the World.

## CRITICISM OF EKATMAVADAM

From this it may be seen that Ekatmavadam or Kevala Adwaitam is the typical system of Vedantic thought. The Agamic creed of the Vaishnavites was improved upon by Sri. Ramanuja who made it Vedic by his interpretation of Brahmasutram. In the Saivite group, (Akam) the Sivadwaita doctrine has been influenced by monistic views, and its best exposition is by Sri Kanta who is a great commentator on Brahmasutram. This creed should not be mistaken for the Siddhanta system which has its origin in Tantric literature.

A critical examination of the cardinal tenets of Ekatmavadam will take us straight to the teachings of Tantric or Tamilian Saiva Philosophy. The Vedantins hold that God alone exists. Then the question arises whether what they call maya exists or not.

If its existence be granted, then it would lead to the positing of two ultimate entities God and Maya, which cuts at the root of the monistic theory that nothing exists, save Brahmam. If its non-existence be assumed, then the phenomenon of the universe cannot be explained away in any other manner. The next question is whether it is intelligent or non-intelligent. If it be regarded as a sentient entity, it must be part and parcel of the Almighty who is the one Intelligence that really exists according to the monistic view. This will lead to the conclusion that the limiting power of Maya or the source of all evil is in God himself. Then the Power that causes the self-limitation of God must be more potent than the better parts of God Himself and God would have to be viewed as a mixture of good and evil.

On the other hand, if this Maya be an unintelligent something, then the system does not explain how the Intelligent God can be reflected through this inanimate medium, and appear as the world and the souls.

Then if, casting away the idea of Maya,

it be held that God Himself expanded into the unintelligent world and the intelligent souls, how are we to answer the question whether there are two parts in the Almighty corresponding to the sentient and the non-sentient portions of creation? What is exactly the line between the two in God? Can God then be presumed to be a Being of pure intelligence?

Again, what is meant by saying that even the souls which are centres of intelligence unreal? If the Jiva is a reflection of one Supreme Soul, why should there be so many reflections, and how are we to account for the multiplicity thereof? Is it possible to conceive that God admits of material dimensions so as to be cut up into countless souls? If the soul is really God Himself, how are we to solve the problem of evil? If evil be due to finitude and the soul be God under limitation, how are we to explain the possibility of God undergoing such mysterious restriction of His freedom? If God be subject to the weakness of being self-limited as often as possible, then the very idea of salvation would be quite an illusion. If souls, as separate

from God, are unreal, to whom are they so illusory? From a personal standpoint, it is our existence and experience that are real to us beyond anything else. If the world is only in our idea, the idea of God itself is only intellectual. Then it would appear that nothing beyond ourselves would be real to us. If the world and souls be unreal to God, what is the need for speaking about appearance and reality from the point of view of a Being who is naturally transcendental? Further, what is real to us is our suffering and how is it to be explained away in accord with monistic tenets? Thus the Ekatmavada and allied theories leave us in confusion as respects the nature of the Universe, that of the soul and of God Himself in relation to these.

What is opposed to the Siddhanta system in these doctrines is the confusion of the intelligent with the unintelligent and the identification of the intelligent many with the Supreme Being. In sketching an outline of the Siddhanta system of metaphysics, we may first direct our attention to the unintelligent root-cause of the phenomenal world.

## SAIVA SIDDHANTA TATVAS

The distinctive merit of the Siddhanta school of thought in this respect is its wonderful progress in the scientific diagnosis of Nature. While the Sankhyans pursued the analysis of the cosmos down to the substratum of Mulaprakriti, the Saivites plunged deeper and detected that even behind it, there were five subtler strata of the pre-material un-intelligent entity and that Mulaprakriti was evolved from one of them. Out of these five tatwas, as they are called, three serve to evolve in a general rudimentary manner the faculties of knowing, doing and feeling which the tatwas below Mulaprakriti develop, more definitely and elaborately; while the other two are concerned respectively in limiting the enjoyment and experience of finite intelligences and directing the re-action of thoughts and doings on their agents in due time. These two are in ordinary parlance called Time and Fate. All these five are derived from a subtler substratum called Impure maya which is far more refined than Mulaprakriti, but which is so designated

because behind it there is the ultimate section of the unintelligent entity called Pure maya which in turn admits of a five-fold division.

This pure maya provides the medium through which the soul in its finite condition derives the light of knowledge from God and contact therewith does not obscure one's psychic powers like the impure maya and the Mulaprakriti. The term 'Maya' bears a different acceptation in the Siddhanta system from what it is taken to mean by the Maya-vada school of thought. It does not mean illusion. The Tantric or Tamilian view is that each syllable of the word has a significant meaning. 'Ma' means involution or that to which the universe reduces itself and 'ya' means evolution or that from which everything comes out. This is the way in which the term is split by orthodox Siddhantis. I surmise that the proper way to split the term is into Tamil Māi (—மாய்) and â (-ஆ) respectively meaning in Tamil 'to hide or die' and 'to become'. Both மாய் and ஆ are pure Tamil words. So, Maya means the irreducible, undeveloped,

pre-material unintelligent entity which is the beginning of all evolution and the end of all involution, (*i. e.*, at once the womb and grave of Nature.) The Impure and the Pure maya are the two ultimate basic substrata of the Universe. What are called tatwas or Mudals in Tamil (—முதல்) are the material principles which help to evolve the different stages of the evolution of the world from its primordial dual basis. Up to Mulaprakriti the tatwas are said to be twenty four in number. All the Vedic schools of thought which have not been influenced by the Tantric system, posit the existence of only these twenty-four tatwas, in all, since they have not gone beyond Mulaprakriti. In addition to these, the Saiva Agamas speak of twelve higher tatwas— seven of the impure maya, and five of the pure maya, the whole number of tatwas being thirty-six on the whole. These thirty-six are sub-divided into ninety-six according to one calculation, which we need not consider here. All the tatwas are successive variations of the Unintelligent Maya which help the evolution and expression of the otherwise inexpressible faculties of the

intelligent many, which have to be evolved and purified as a condition precedent to final salvation. It should be noted that the Almighty is beyond all tatwas and does not require their aid for achieving any end of His own. On the other hand, it is He that energises the tatwas for the good of the souls. The root-cause of the unintelligent does not at all originate from the intelligent one. It is an entity uncreated by itself, but capable of evolution into tatwas by the Sakti of the Almighty.

## SOULS

So much about the Universe. We shall now consider the subject of souls. The peculiar feature of the Siddhanta lies in its elucidation of the nature of the soul in a far better manner than any other system. The Buddhist speaks of the soul only as a stream of consciousness and believes that at the final stage of psychic evolution, there would be an annihilation of consciousness or at least of the force that maintains the unity of moments of perception. This view cannot satisfy our reason since it does not explain how something

that exists can turn into nothing. The Jain doubtless posits the existence of as many souls as there are centres of knowing, feeling and doing, having certain common attributes, and in this respect he is at one with the exponents of Vedic systems of thought other than the Ekatmavadin, but he does not present us an accurate exposition of the chief aspect of the soul. It is the Jain view that the soul in its primeval stage is bound down to matter, but it can by its own efforts achieve its salvation. Only the first soul attained freedom without any example to follow and chalked out the path for others. He is therefore the Guru and God of all others, although he is not the Creator. If the capacity to free itself from bondage is inherent in the soul and no aid is required from one supreme Being, how could such a soul have been enthralled by matter at any time of its existence? Furthermore, the Jains believe that the ethereal region of Akasa which extends boundlessly beyond the cosmic world is the background of the soul's eternal progress even after emancipation from material bonds. Now this Akasa is really the permanent unintelligent entity which even

the freed soul can never get rid of, at least for its residence or onward march. Such a position cannot be regarded as representing the final goal of freedom from the unintelligent ; or dependence of the soul on the part of the Unintelligent must be viewed as a permanent characteristic of the soul, so that liberation of the intelligent from the Unintelligent can never be complete according to the Jains. This detracts from the dignity of the soul as a purely self-existent intelligence.

Without examining this doctrine further, we shall see what the Vedic schools say of the soul. The Mimamsa has little to say, save that souls exist. The Tarka schools hold that deprived of what is called the mind, the soul is practically unintelligent not only during bondage but also after its salvation. The Sankhyan view is that the soul is a changeless intelligence. If so, there is no need to speak of salvation. The Yoga school, though granting the existence of the supreme Being, has more or less the same theory as the Sankhyans, and believes that Yogic practices will pave the way for realisation of

one's true nature and attainment of salvation. The Ekatmavadins, as already shown, could see no distinction between the soul and God, but view the former as an unreal shadow of the latter. The Vaishnavite theory regarding the soul as a part or attribute of God, logically leads to the conclusion that the soul is God Himself. Although the Madhwas hold that the soul has a distinct individuality from God, their conception of its nature is quite imperfect since they classify souls into three classes Satvic, Rajasic, and Tamasic by nature and view them as being limited in evolution by their respective temper. A Tamasic soul can never become Satvic, so that there is a limit to the spiritual development of the second and third classes of souls. Needless it is to refer to various systems of thought on the Tantric side as they are hardly known to the world at large.

The Saiva Siddhantins hold that souls are distinct centres of knowing, feeling and doing, and are countless in number just as the Unintelligent is infinite in extent. Each soul is distinct from God as an entity ; for if it were God himself, it could not have an

inclination to the Unintelligent and been subject to limitation thereby. But if at the same time contact with the root of matter were inherent in its nature, the soul could never become independent of Nature. Hence its inclination to the Unintelligent is of such a character that it is capable of being got rid of at a certain stage of evolution : otherwise all progress should be only an illusion. The soul has been compared to water in this respect. Water changes in colour and value with the nature of the land on which it flows, although by itself it is pure as it drops from the clouds. The soul is by itself an intelligent being but a peculiar trait of it is that it becomes one with what it contacts. This shows that it cannot be its own master. Hence it follows that all souls must each have a master, and since the orderly development and involution of the universe wherein souls have to work out their salvation requires the presence of a single master, God is the one grand leader of all the souls that exist, as well as of the Universe. Though God and the soul are both intelligent beings, they are not homogeneous because it is clear that the

nature of Divine Intelligence is fundamentally distinct from that of the soul. God is always the leader and the soul is always led by Him. Hence souls are uncreated intelligent entities not originating from God, and though immortal like Him, ever requiring His guidance and control. God knows everything Himself, but the soul requires His help at every step of its knowing or doing. God is to the soul what the sunlight is to the eye. While the soul can see if made to see, the Unintelligent can never be made to do so.

Although God is its real guide, the soul cannot realise that fact so long as it is inclined to and bound up with the unintelligent. Not only is the soul subject to limitation by the unintelligent, but when it is ignorant of God, it takes delight therein, or is at least against its dissociation from it. The inclination of the soul to the unintelligent is its weakness that has rendered it blind to its own real nature and the nature of its Master. This renders it finite and is the source of all evil. It is neither inherent in the soul nor given by the Almighty. It is called Sirumai in Tamil and Anavam in Sanskrit. The one

purpose of creation is to redeem the soul from this its inclination and ignorance by helping it to turn away from the Unintelligent to the Supreme Intelligence.

The soul is in its primeval state bent towards the Unintelligent and has an inclination thereto—so that from eternity it has been just like iron in the ore. If the soul is purified of its evil tendency, and has its bent made straight and turned towards God, it would not return to its original condition, being essentially an intelligent entity feeling its harmony with its master, the self-effulgent Light of Wisdom. The Psyche first lies tied down to the Unintelligent and feels delighted in thraldom because of her inclination to become what she contacts. Directly she realises her true nature as distinct from the Unintelligent and turns away to meet her Lord, she cannot look back to her old way. It is in this respect that the Saiva Siddhanta differs from the philosophy of Dayananda who holds the view that after certain millions of years, the soul goes back into bondage.

The soul has got powers of knowing,

feeling and doing. These have only a limited scope in its unfree condition, but become infinite when it is rid of the bonds of the Unintelligent. It should at the same time be borne in mind that they come into play under the guidance of the Divine Will. It is the divine will that energises the mayic substratum of the unintelligent and evolves the universe out of it. Bodies which are the tenements of the soul are all bits of the Universe. Hence the force of the maxim 'Whatever is in Andam is in Pindam as well.'

(Andam=Universe=Macrocosm.)
(Pindam=Body=Microcosm.)

It is God that moves the soul to know, feel and do. This we may call the energising of the soul. For the energising of the soul and the universe, God's powers must be in Adwaitic (two less) contact with the souls and the world. Just as the soul that guides the body is immanent in it, so too God is immanent in the universe in such a manner that His intelligence and activity are indistinguishably at the back of the whole creation. In like manner as the light of the

sun mingles with the light of the eye to make things visible to us, the powers of God are in adwaitic contact with those of the soul for purposes of guidance and control. This is the meaning of the Shastric dictum that God is Adwaitic with the world. The saying does not imply God's identity with the world itself, so as to lead to the mistaken inference that God Himself is the world in another form. For this reason, it is said that the Saiva Siddhanta is the true Adwaitic system, and not any other. God, the soul and the world are in Adwaitic contact with one another but God's contact is free and arises from His self-less love for the souls. God is back of the soul which in its unfree condition is turned towards the world and knows little of God. If the soul loses its grasp of the world and turns back, it falls into God and is led by Him ever after.

Although God is immanent in the world, He is the free agent of it and is not bound down thereto. At the same time, He is by himself transcendental as well. Passing into the transcendental aspect of God where the freed soul enjoys perfect union with the

guiding Intelligence is the final goal of salvation in the Siddhanta System. This is the far-off event to which the whole creation moves and the evolution of the universe by God's Sakti is for the benefit of the soul. God's Grace or Sakti or Love is the connecting link that relates God to the souls and the universe. It is the mysterious Divine force that maintains the harmony of all that exist.

உருவருள் குணங்களோடு முணர்வரு ளுருவிற் ரோன்றுங்
கருமமு மருள தன்றன் கரசரணுதி சாங்கந்
தருமரு ளுபாங்க மெல்லாந் தானரு டனக்கொன் றின்றி
யருளுரு வுயிருக் கென்ற யாக்கின னசித்த னன்றே.
(சிவஞானசித்தியார்)

His form is Love. His attributes are Love.
His action is Love. His limbs are Love.
His tissues are Love.
All self-less Love of His for the good of souls.

"அருளிற் பிறந்திட் டருளில் வளர்ந்திட்
டருளி லழிந்திளைப் பாறி மறைந்திட்
டருளான வானந்தத் தாரமு தூட்டி
யருளாலென் னந்தி யகம்புகுந் தானே."
(திருமந்திரம்-1800)

Born in Love, Grown in Love, Lost in Love,
Hid in Love, Suckled with pure Bliss of Love,
My heart He did enter by Love alone.

Thus while there are three ultimate entities God, soul and the unintelligent root of matter or Maya, substantial distinct from one another, God's Sakti or Love (*i.e.*, Arul) preserves their harmony in an Adwaitic fashion. This is in brief the gist of the Saiva Siddhanta Metaphysics.

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